

Frequently-Asked Questions (FAQs) for:

- **ROSS: RSDM-Family, RSDM-Elderly/Persons with Disabilities, Homeownership Supportive Services**
- **PIH Family Self-Sufficiency**
- **PH Neighborhood Networks**

1. In the ROSS NOFA, can a non-profit apply on behalf of a PHA?

No, a non-profit organization may not apply on behalf of a PHA. Non-profits are eligible as applicants if they have the support of residents or tribes/TDHEs. See the threshold requirement for non-profits for support letters Section III.C.2.d. for more information on how these organizations must demonstrate their support of the non-profit that is serving as the applicant. It should be noted that Section III.C.4.c. allows for joint applications between eligible applicants and Section II.A.4 of the NOFA allows for subcontracting. Grantees must follow federal procurement regulations found in HUD regulations at 24 CFR 84.40-84.48 and 24 CFR 85.36.

2. If an applicant received an ROSS RSDM-Family grant over three years ago and has now completed the 3-year grant term, can they apply again? Yes. Note, however, that in rating factor 2, applicants must show that there is need for the proposed activities and services.

3. The ROSS (covering RSDM-Family, RSDM-Elderly/persons with Disabilities, and Homeownership Supportive Services), PIH Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and PH Neighborhood Networks NOFAs require that the salary and fringe benefits for a Project Coordinator are limited to \$65,000 per year, not to exceed 30% of the total grant. Can two staff be hired as Project Coordinators, as long as their combined salaries and fringe benefits do not exceed the \$65,000/30% restriction?

No, these grant funds cannot be used to fund two staff to be “Project Coordinators.” The ROSS, FSS and NN NOFAs indicate funding restrictions in Section IV.E., including restrictions on salaries covered by the grant. The language indicates that applicants may propose to hire “a qualified project coordinator” to run the grant program. Further the language directs that the grant program will fund up to \$65,000 in combined annual salary and fringe benefits for “a full-time project coordinator.” Use of the word “a” means “one,” that is one staff person may be recognized as the “project coordinator.”

4. The NOFAs allow funds to be used for “direct services” staff and defines them as “housing authority personnel who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application.” Does this mean that non-profit personnel cannot be counted as direct services staff?

No. The intent of the definition is to reference personnel of the applicant (whether a housing authority, non-profit etc.) who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application e.g., case managers, van drivers, job trainers, childcare providers, among other positions.

5. The NOFAs allow funds to be used for “direct services” staff and defines them as “personnel who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application e.g., case managers, van drivers, job trainers, childcare providers, among other positions. ROSS funds may not be used to pay for salaries for any other kind of staff.” The fact that this definition allows van drivers to be paid for as direct services staff seems to conflict with the restriction that transportation services are ineligible activities. Please explain.

The ROSS program prohibits transportation costs to be paid for under the RSDM-Elderly grant category. Specifically, the NOFA states in “Ineligible Activities” (Section IV.E.6.p.), “For RSDM Elderly grant applicants – transportation costs of residents (grant funds may be used to pay for coordination and set-up of transportation services).” Thus, a van driver would not be eligible as a direct services staff under the Elderly grant category.

6. Since the ROSS RSDM-Family component of the NOFA allows for the payment of direct services staff, can we have both a Project Coordinator and a Case Manager?

Yes. Though case management activities are a responsibility of the Project Coordinator, it is allowable to hire a separate Case Manager as a direct services staff person under the ROSS RSDM-Family grant category.

7. Under the ROSS Homeownership Supportive Services (HSS), can a case manager be hired as a direct services staff?

Yes. Though case management activities are a responsibility of the Project Coordinator, it is allowable to hire a separate Case Manager as a direct services staff person under the ROSS RSDM-Homeownership grant category.

8. Is there a salary/fringe benefits cap for the direct services staff?

No, however applicants should be aware that any salaries paid should be comparable to area standards and that records of this must be kept on file by the applicant.

9. Would a budget analyst count as a direct services staff person?

No. The Funding Restriction section of the NOFA defines direct services staff as personnel who, as their primary responsibility, provide services directly to residents that participate in the activities described in this application e.g., case managers, van drivers, job trainers, childcare providers, among other positions.” A budget analyst would not be providing services to residents as their primary responsibility and thus are not considered as direct services staff.

10. Can you clarify which type of units I should use in order to determine the maximum grant amount I can request? E.g., do I use the total number of public housing units in the PHA inventory or the number of occupied ones?

Family (line 2, part C of the Fact Sheet): For PHAs/Tribes - number of occupied conventional family public housing units as of September 30, 2004, per their budget. The maximum grant award is \$125,000 for each RA. Nonprofit organizations that have

resident support or the support of tribes or RAs are limited to \$125,000 for each RA, with a maximum of \$375,000.

Elderly (line 3, part C of the Fact Sheet): For PHAs/Tribes - number of occupied elderly and disabled conventional public housing units as of September 30, 2004, per their budget. The maximum grant award is \$125,000 for each RA. Nonprofit organizations that have resident support or the support of tribes or RAs are limited to \$125,000 for each RA, with a maximum of \$375,000.

HSS (line 1, part C of the Fact Sheet): For PHAs/Tribes - number of occupied conventional family public housing units as of September 30, 2004, per their budget. Nonprofit organizations that have resident support or the support of tribes or RAs are limited to \$125,000 for each RA, with a maximum of \$375,000.

11. Do I fill out the fee section of the Contract Administrator partnership agreement and other form (form 52767)? I thought I could not use grant funds to pay for a Contract Administrator?

No, grant funds cannot be used to pay for salary/fees of a contract administrator. Accordingly, it is suggested that you leave blank the sections of the partnership agreement and form that refer to payment of such salaries/fees (the form will be updated in the future).

12. Can service commitments for ineligible activities be counted for match purposes?

No. Service commitments for activities/items identified in the Ineligible Activities/Costs portion of the Funding Restrictions section (Section IV.E.) of the NOFA cannot be accepted for purposes of meeting the match threshold requirement of the NOFA.

13. Does anything that is not listed as “eligible” in the NOFA count as “ineligible”?

No.

14. How can I set aside vouchers in order to meet the threshold requirement of the HSS NOFA if my Section 8 waiting list is closed?

Any changes a PHA wants to make concerning its housing choice voucher program must be made by changing its Administrative Plan, with approval from the PHA's authorized governing body (e.g., board of directors). The PHA should advise their local HUD field office of such changes and provide them with a copy of the updated Administrative Plan. Such changes to the Administrative Plan may include temporarily reopening the voucher waiting list, defining a preference for the waiting list (e.g., residents who meet standard eligibility criteria and have completed homeownership training/counseling criteria defined by the PHA may receive a voucher before other residents on the waiting list who do not qualify for this preference). Applicants applying for an ROSS HSS grant must meet the Section III.C.2.h. threshold requirement which requires them to commit to provide a certain number of vouchers per year to residents and to enroll a certain residents over the 3-year term of the grant (tables in the NOFA detail the amounts depending on the applicant). It is the PHA's responsibility to determine, given their local conditions, policies and laws, whether making such voucher-related commitments is possible and, further, advantageous to the needs of their residents.

15. Can CDBG funds be used as match?

Yes. Section III.C.2.a. describes the match commitment required under this NOFA and what types of resources may be counted. The section states: “Other resources/services that can be committed include: in-kind services such as contributions of administrative services provided to the applicant; funds from federal sources (not including ROSS funds) as allowed by statute, including for example Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); funds from any state or local government sources; and funds from private contributions. Applicants may also partner with other program funding recipients to coordinate the use of resources in the target area.” Please note that other ROSS funds are not acceptable.

16. Can I use the same commitment to meet the match requirements for two different ROSS grant applications?

No. As Section III.C.2.a. states: “If you are applying for more than one ROSS grant, you must use different sources of match donations for each grant application and you must indicate which additional ROSS grant(s) you are applying for by attaching an additional page to HUD budget form 424-CBW stating the sources and amounts of each of your match contributions for this application as well as any other HUD programs to which you are applying.” Applicants must follow all the commitment documentation requirements detailed in this section and throughout the NOFA.

17. If an applicant currently has a part-time FSS Program Coordinator and wants to make that position full-time, would they apply as a Renewal applicant or an Expansion applicant?

Applicants who currently have a FSS Program Coordinator hired on a part-time basis, may indicate themselves as a renewal applicant. They should clearly indicate throughout the application the full-time salary amount requested and demonstrate the need for the increased salary (e.g., growth of program size).

18. If an applicant plans to contract a resident to assist with the implementation of the grant, are they still subject the 5% salary restriction?

Yes. In accordance with Section IV.F.6.b. of the NOFA: “Resident Salaries. Only the RSDM-Family category and NN program permits grantees to use grant funds for this purpose. No more than five percent of RSDM-Family and NN funds may be used to pay for resident salaries.”

20. Does furniture count as “overhead” or “physical improvements”? Depending, is it subject to the 20% limitation for “physical improvements”?

Furniture is considered to be an administrative cost, as Section IV.E. defines admin costs as including but not limited to the “purchase of furniture, office equipment and supplies, local travel, and utilities.” Administrative costs may not exceed 10 percent of the total grant amount requested from HUD.

21. Can applicants sub-contract funds?

Yes. Section II.A.4 states: “Subcontracting is permitted. Grantees must follow federal procurement regulations found in HUD regulations at 24 CFR 84.40-84.48 and 24 CFR 85.36.” All subcontracted funds must be spent on eligible activities. If more than 10% of grant funds are subcontracted to any one agency, they must complete a separate 424-CBW.

22. Can an RA or a Non-Profit apply for an RSDM-Elderly grant to serve a PHA that already has an Elderly Services Coordinator under the Operating Subsidy program?

Yes, as long as they are proposing different services.